

EXHIBIT 44

Steve
Ditko

in the 1960s

in his own words

in his interviews

in the words
of the fans who knew him

DITKO-0001

From *Komik Heroes of the Future* #6 (late 1964): Donald Schank conducted the third known interview with Steve Ditko. While Bernie Bubnis's interview took place in Steve Ditko's studio, and Fred Landesman's was conducted in person at the 1964 New York Comicon, Donald's interview was done through the mail. When contacted for this book, he recalled, "[I]t was a very pleasant surprise. I was about twelve years old and simply sent off the interview questions to Ditko, c/o Marvel Comics' editorial offices. I had no idea if he'd even seen the letter, much less reply. But he did, and enclosed the 8.5" x 11" drawing with his handwritten interview answers. I was a VERY thrilled kid back then!"

THE SPIDER'S MAN

The Life Story of Steve Ditko!!!

I was born in 1927 in Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

1950- I came to New York to enter the comic industry.

I enrolled at The Cartoonists and Illustrators School.

I was working during the day (non art job) and going to C&I at night.

Periodically, I made the rounds of all the comic publishers and was turned down by all.

1953- I received my first job in comics with a small outfit - 2nd Headline Pub. (Black Magic)

This was the short-lived period of 3-D. It was an involved process. I worked with others inking Harvey's 3-D books and Simon* Kirby's "Captain 3-D."

I started working for Charlton Press and their line of weird books (Thing) (This Magazine Haunted)

1954- Early this year I had to leave New York and give up comics. (The investigation into comics and the code had nothing to do with it)

1955- Late this year I returned to New York and did my first work for Stan Lee and Timely.

1956- I drifted away from Timely and back to Charlton Press.

1957- I did all Charlton Press and their line of fantasy. (Mysterious Traveller, Dr. Haunt)

1958- Stan Lee asked me to do some work for Timely. I returned to Timely but was still doing some work for CP.

1959- I was doing a story for each of their fantasy line. Started Captain Atom for Charlton Press. It went nowhere!

1960- I was doing the same for Timely. Started doing Gorgo & Konga for CP.

1961- Timely same. CP- K & G

1962- Timely- I started doing Spider-Man. CP- still doing K & G.

1963- Timely- Still doing Spider-Man and started Dr. Strange. CP- I stopped doing K & G.

Present- I am still doing Spider-Man and Dr. Strange.

And now, since Mr. Ditko has finished his story, we will get to the interview-Ed.

I'm going to avoid some of the questions like the plague because I don't have time to go into them in detail and they could be taken the wrong way.

Who is your favorite inker?

That has bubonic written all over it. I don't care for the very slick mechanical type of inking. Prefer it to look like it was done by hand not machine.

Who is your favorite letterer?

None. Just so it's clear and easy to read.

Do you ever letter your own stories?

Never. Never would want to.

Who is the best writer you have worked for?

Only one I ever worked for was Stan Lee.

When you are not able to do S-M any more, whose style would be best to take it over?

There are a lot who could handle it just as well or better. The only problem is fans of any super hero tend to panic when someone else touches it.

When you first started working at Marvel, did you think you would be doing a super hero?

Yes. These trends are always in the back of one's mind.

How often do you ink your own pencilings?

Almost always. I'm not a tight penciler. Most of the work is done with the inking.

Do you do the lay outs of the S-M covers?

Some I do, some I don't. Depends on time element, deadline.

Do you think the Marvel staff is large enough to keep going if they keep on creating new heroes?

No staff is large enough if they keep creating new heroes and doesn't

drop any other features or books. I don't know what the maximum output of the present staff could be.

What types of stories do you find hardest to draw?
Stories that don't have anything I can get excited about.

What type of stories do you find easiest to draw?
Stories about interesting people doing interesting things in interesting places. Stories that move. I lean toward the fantasy.

Who is your favorite hero?
Dr. Spider Strange-Man. I think you tried to trick me on that question.

Who is your favorite villain?
Dr. Doom is very good. He can do almost anything. I like Dr. Octopus very much, but he's floundering. He hasn't found himself yet.

Have anything new on the drawing board?
Not a Thing.

How do you feel about a fanzine editor asking you a lot of questions?
It's better than nobody asking any questions. I happen to be interested in anything that pertains to comics and enjoy fanzines very much.

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From *Cinemagicdom* #5 (1964): In his *Comic Comments* column, writer Ken Dixon, while not mentioning Steve Ditko, nevertheless presents an enthusiastic review of *Amazing Spider-Man* #19.

SPIDER-MAN #19 with "Spidey Strikes Back" strikes a blow for Spider-man against the world. This ish concludes the tension-building 3 ish series. With #19 we can breathe a sigh of relief for Spidey comes swinging back strong, hard into his opponents with the style of action that has made **SPIDER-MAN** the finest comic book on the market today!

From *Capa-Alpha* #9 (1965): Fan writer Pete Jackson used his column "Rambling Retrospective Survey" to review some of Steve Ditko's then-current work. It is certainly a change to see a mention of the artist's little-noticed work at Charlton since in those days most fans were interested in his Marvel work. To this day, that appears to remain the case with the majority of Ditko fans. These excerpts from his column include only the reviews pertaining to Steve Ditko.

Well, Charlton Comix did something strange and came out with a good superhero even tho it is a reprint. It is, of course, Captain Atom, and the artwork is by good old Steve Ditko. I know that I read one of the stories before (the last one) and the second one seems vaguely familiar but whether I read it before or not is hidden by the mists of my foggy memory. The first one, the origin story, I know I didn't read before and it's pretty good, too. As for artwork wise I always considered Ditko to be one of the better illustrators and now that he is on the Marvel staff, I like him best next to Wally Wood...

I continually thank the Vishanti or whoever that Ditko is still drawing Dr. Strange. If they put Kirby on it I'm going to raise quite a bit of hell. No one but Ditko can do the strange, weird scenes in this fabulous strip. Dr. Strange is one of my favorite strips and this adventure gets better all the time. I wonder who the girl is and what relation she will have in the future. The poor old venerable master isn't coming along too well it seems.

From *The Comic Journal* #1 (1965): Not to be confused with Gary Groth's *The Comics Journal*, which did not begin until the 1970s, two kids named Dave Armstrong and Johnny Ryan put out an earlier fanzine with that title in 1965. Johnny Ryan in his "The Origin of Spider-Man" offers his thoughts on Steve Ditko (below). Editor Dave Armstrong shares his opinions as well (bottom).

I don't know of any other writer who could have done such a fine job on Spidey as Stan Lee . . . He's got a kookie little style of writing all his own.

As for Steve Ditko, he's the only artist I know who can draw Spider-man right! Whenever I see any other artist attempt it, it just, I mean it looks too . . . The legs aren't . . . Aw! It just don't look right! That's all there is to it!!

Another thing that gets on my nerves is the "myth" that Jack Kirby is doing the best work at Marvel, which in my opinion is completely false. It is plain to see that Steve Ditko has more control over his drawing of the anatomy and muscle structure of Spidey and utilizes shadowing to its best on street clothes, and in more recent issues of Spidey and Doc Strange Steve has been adding more in the way of backgrounds.